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Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6465th meeting

Wednesday, 5 January 2011, 3 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Barbalić	(Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Members:	Brazil	Mrs. Dunlop
	China	Mr. Wang Min
	Colombia	Mr. Alzate
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Moungara Moussotsi
	Germany	Mr. Wittig
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Nigeria	Mr. Edokpa
	Portugal	Mr. Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Safronkov
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Letter dated 22 November 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/920)

Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process (S/2010/658)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Expression of welcome to new members and of thanks to outgoing members of the Council

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council this year, I should like to extend my very warm wishes for a fruitful new year to all members of the Security Council, the United Nations and the Secretariat.

On behalf of the Council, I would like to extend a warm welcome to the new members: Colombia, Germany, India, Portugal and South Africa. We look forward with confidence to their participation in the work of the Council. Their experience and wisdom will be of invaluable assistance in the discharge of the Council's enormous responsibilities.

I would like to take this opportunity to express the Council's deep gratitude to the outgoing members — Austria, Japan, Mexico, Turkey and Uganda — for their important contributions to the work of the Council during their term in 2009 and 2010.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: I should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to Ms. Susan Rice, Permanent Representative of the United States of America, for her service as President of the Security Council for the month of December 2010. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Rice and her team for the great diplomatic skill with which they conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 22 November 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2006/920)

Report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process (S/2010/658)

The President: I have received a letter from the representative of Nepal, in which he requests to participate in this meeting. I propose to invite that representative to participate in this meeting, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Security Council, I should like to extend an invitation under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Karin Landgren, Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in Nepal.

It is so decided.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2010/658, containing the report of the Secretary-General on the request of Nepal for United Nations assistance in support of its peace process. Members of the Council also have before them copies of a letter dated 5 January 2011 from the Secretary-General, which will be issued as document S/2011/1.

I now give the floor to Ms. Landgren.

Ms. Landgren: The Council has before it the Secretary-General's sixteenth and final report on Nepal's request for support to its peace process (S/2010/658). Since the issuance of the previous report of the Secretary-General of 2 September (S/2010/453) and my briefing on 7 September (see S/PV.6377), the Council has also heard two oral reports on this issue by Under-Secretary-General B. Lynn Pascoe. The Council decided on 15 September (see S/PV.6385) that the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) would terminate on 15 January 2011. Since then, UNMIN has continued to encourage the early resolution of issues that would contribute to the Mission's orderly departure and, furthermore, would give the United Nations, the Council and above all the people of Nepal confidence that the peace process is on track.

Nepal's peace process has remained largely deadlocked following the resignation of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal in June 2010. There has been little progress on the most critical issues of forming a new Government and integrating and rehabilitating the personnel of the Maoist army. Some progress has been made on the new constitution, but it may be difficult to meet the promulgation deadline of May 2011.

Despite many problems, Nepal's interim Government between April 2007 and August 2008 reflected agreement to share power. Since the elections, the parties have found it extremely difficult to maintain

consensus and to find satisfactory power-sharing arrangements. They recently floated the idea of a rotational system of leadership, but did not reach agreement. At issue is not merely whether a new Government can be formed, but whether Nepal's peace process can move forward without it.

Voting for a new prime minister has been halted since the President prorogued Parliament on 20 November, under circumstances described in the Secretary-General's report. Thereafter, the Government was not legally obliged to reconvene Parliament, and indeed Prime Minister Nepal had suggested that he might not do so until the Maoist army came under the effective supervision of the Special Committee. After a special session of Parliament convened at the request of over one-quarter of its members, it was agreed on 23 December to hold the regular session at the earliest. Parliament has now been summoned for 9 January, and it appears unlikely that a new Government will be in place by the time UNMIN's mandate expires.

Growing differences within the major political parties continue to add to the mistrust between the parties. In recent years, the internal processes of all major parties have arguably become significantly more open, participatory, inclusive and democratic, in line with provisions of the interim constitution, but there is divergence, within the parties on the peace process itself. Strong voices in the traditional parties demand an unambiguous embrace of multiparty democracy and pluralism by the Maoists. Within the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M), there is a perception of being marginalized and deliberately excluded from a leadership role in Government.

The remaining tasks of the peace process, and particularly the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, require collective political will. No party on its own can identify and implement satisfactory solutions. But the failure of the peace process to advance has strengthened the hand of those on all sides who deride it as unproductive or far too slow. The Council will recall how close the Constituent Assembly had come to a premature end last May for similar reasons. Now, there is a real risk that the failure of the peace process will become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The parties have not resolved the issue of the future monitoring of arms and armies after UNMIN's exit. Restrictions on the formerly warring armies have been a cornerstone of Nepal's peace, and as such the monitoring arrangements are also a potential flashpoint for failure. The independent, interim monitoring of the armies was intended initially to help create confidence for the election of the Constituent Assembly, and thereafter for the completion of the remaining key tasks of the peace process. The natural end to monitoring would have come with the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel and the Army's democratic reform and rightsizing, both activities which should have gotten under way with the interim Government in 2007.

Despite many challenges, Nepal's arms monitoring regime has been strikingly successful. There have been violations, as reported to the Council, but these have been the exception. Based on a legal agreement and a light presence of United Nations arms monitors, the main ingredients have been the armies' self-discipline and the United Nations-chaired Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee, a reliable mechanism for building confidence, addressing violations and resolving disputes.

Since March 2010, and as requested by the Council, UNMIN has consulted intensively with the parties on options for a transfer of monitoring responsibilities. We put forward examples of alternative arrangements — recalling, for instance, the original joint monitoring teams of 2007, with membership of the Nepal Army, the Maoist army and UNMIN. At the same time, our strong advice to the parties has been that, rather than simply replicating a monitoring regime, they should move forward more swiftly on finding solutions for the 19,000 Maoist army personnel. UNMIN itself sought to generate discussion and planning, and many potential donors have also been active on this front.

Following September's four-point agreement, there has been some movement in the secretariat of the Special Committee, as described in the Secretary-General's report. But there is considerable confusion and disagreement on how and by whom monitoring will be conducted after UNMIN. Today, 10 days before the end of the Mission, there is yet no consensus mechanism to which UNMIN can hand over its monitoring responsibilities. It is not clear what will happen after UNMIN withdraws.

This situation presents potential risks, and I would like to set out some legal, political and practical

considerations in this regard. The Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies of 26 November 2006, witnessed by UNMIN, spells out the role of the United Nations Mission as the monitor of these arrangements, as does the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 21 November 2006, both referred to in the interim constitution of 2007.

These agreements are binding on the parties, and become no less so after UNMIN departs. All the agreements can be revised by the parties, for example to provide for an alternative monitoring agent, but they have yet to do so. The departure of UNMIN, the designated monitor, seems set to create a legal void. In September, the Special Committee adopted a directive for the supervision, control and direction, and code of conduct for the Maoist army personnel. The directive itself was not foreseen as substituting for the arms monitoring Agreement, nor as making the Special Committee the replacement of UNMIN. The arms monitoring Agreement is carefully worded. The 24-hour monitoring of weapons belonging to the Maoist army and the Nepal Army is set out in some detail, as are the permitted and restricted activities for both armies and the mechanism for resolving any disputes that arise in this regard.

Since October, I have raised repeatedly with the parties the need for clarity on the monitoring arrangements that will be in place after UNMIN's exit. On 13 December 2010, I wrote to Prime Minister Nepal and UCPN-M Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, with copy to the relevant political parties. The Prime Minister told me on 22 December that the Government would draw up and present to the Maoists a separate agreement covering the gaps between the Special Committee's supervisory regime and the existing arms monitoring regime. This does not appear to have been done, however, and on 3 January UNMIN received a response to our letter from the Prime Minister's Office. I must state clearly that the positions presented in this letter do not reflect consensus in the Special Committee and appear to deviate significantly from the interim constitution.

The Office of the Prime Minister states that the Special Committee will, through its secretariat, take charge of the monitoring functions currently carried out by UNMIN, and any issues not covered by its directives will be addressed by the Special Committee as and when required. Secondly, the letter makes clear that the Nepal Army will no longer be subject to monitoring, as set out in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the arms monitoring Agreement, but will be managed under other existing constitutional and legal provisions. Thirdly, the Prime Minister's Office states that there is no longer a need for any dispute resolution mechanism in connection with monitoring arrangements, as any disputes will be resolved by consensus in the Special Committee. And, finally, the Government reiterates the request that all relevant documents, United Nations equipment and logistics, including the containers with arms and ammunition, be handed over by UNMIN to the Special Committee or designated mechanism.

The proposal for monitoring the Maoist army presented by the office of the Prime Minister had already been rejected formally by the UCPN-M, a position repeated in a letter of 4 January 2011 from the UCPN-M to UNMIN. These monitoring arrangements are not agreed. Nor is there agreement to end the monitoring of the Nepal Army.

This proposal would effectively abrogate critical agreements, with potentially far-reaching political consequences that should be well understood by the Council. Expunging these agreements would create grave uncertainties and can be expected to erode the confidence that has been built up around arms monitoring and through the important achievements of the peace process so far.

UNMIN has consistently pressed for action by the Special Committee on the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel, as constitutionally mandated. The Special Committee is a political body, its nine appointees designated by six political parties, four of which are members of the current Government. Its reduced ability to work by consensus reflects the hardened political divisions overall. It is in no position to resolve highly politicized disputes.

With respect to the request by the Prime Minister's Office for the transfer of UNMIN documents and equipment, UNMIN has underlined its readiness to provide all possible support to agreed follow-on arrangements. UNMIN arms monitoring officers briefed the Special Committee on the monitoring modalities and equipment during their visit to main cantonment site 3, in Chitwan, on 26 December 2010.

In numerous discussions with the Government about the disposal of monitoring-related United

Nations assets, UNMIN has set out the relevant United Nations administrative procedures. It should be noted that the stored arms and ammunition belong to the parties. UNMIN's responsibility has been to monitor it, but the Mission has no authority for its disposal. We have explained that the United Nations-owned vehicles will, as a priority, be sent to other missions. If the other equipment is not needed by other missions or United Nations agencies, it may be available for donation or, in the shorter term, for loan.

As we have underlined, however, the arms-monitoring function is based on agreement, and UNMIN requires a clear and consensual response as to how the monitoring equipment would be used. The Council has consistently urged the parties "to agree and implement a timetabled action plan with clear benchmarks for the integration and rehabilitation of Maoist army personnel" (*resolution 1921 (2010), para. 4*), and decided that, working with the parties, UNMIN should make the necessary arrangements for its withdrawal, including handing over any residual monitoring responsibilities. It is not an option for us to hand over monitoring-related United Nations equipment to the Government without agreement between the Government and the UCPN-M on the nature and form of future monitoring. UNMIN alerted the parties in our letter of 13 December that without such agreement, the Mission would dismantle and remove valuable United Nations-owned assets from the cantonments on 15 January, in line with standard procedures.

Under the four-point agreement concluded last September, the Government and the UCPN-M were to basically complete the remaining tasks of the peace process by 14 January 2011. UNMIN has long pressed the parties to expedite solutions for the Maoist army and the Nepal Army.

At a meeting of the Special Committee on 19 December, its secretariat presented a work plan for the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of the Maoist army. The meeting concluded without agreement on the work plan, however, as Maoist members lodged a written dissent, citing the need to resolve the future of the Arms Monitoring Agreement and the modalities and numbers for integration and rehabilitation.

Major issues pertaining to integration and rehabilitation remain unresolved. These include the numbers, norms and modalities for integration into the security forces; whether the combatants will be integrated principally into the Nepal Army and Armed Police Force or into other forces; and the value of the proposed rehabilitation packages. The international community has long been ready to provide support to rehabilitation options. It is past time for addressing the largely unproductive lives led by young people in cantonments, notwithstanding the training provided to many and their completion of school-leaving certificates.

The United Nations has also consistently pointed to the importance of establishing the right size for the Nepal Army and bringing it under democratic control, as foreseen in the Interim Constitution. A Cabinet meeting on 26 December decided to form a three-member defence directorate committee headed by the Defence Minister to oversee the process of democratization and civilian control of the Nepal Army. The Chief of Army Staff is a member, and the Defence Secretary is a member-secretary. This is the first formal mechanism aimed at better coordination between the Nepal Army and the Ministry of Defence.

The Council and UNMIN have urged the parties to find a consensual way forward through flexibility and compromise, while remaining true to their commitments to the fundamental principles and goals set out in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including multiparty democracy, human rights, the rule of law and the fundamental transformation of the State to address the problems based on class, caste, region and sex.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement remains a lodestar for Nepal, pinpointing the issues that hold the key to sustainable peace and development. Many ethnic and traditionally marginalized groups now anticipate their improved representation at all levels of society and Government, and the benefits of greater decentralization. The contestation over resources and a share in decision-making is now heightened and can be expected to be a source of future tension and potential instability.

Issues related to ownership of land and property are central to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and subsequent agreements. But land-reform efforts have stalled, and the provision of land to economically backward classes has been limited and incomplete, as has the return of land and property seized by the Maoists during the conflict.

The human rights situation continues to be characterized by a general atmosphere of impunity and lack of accountability. As the Council is aware, some journalists have been killed, while others have been threatened. Efforts to establish a truth and reconciliation commission and a commission of inquiry on disappearances have slowed.

Security in the Terai remains fragile and the region has experienced a spate of extrajudicial killings. Violent youth groups, including the Young Communist League and the Youth Force, engaged in especially significant violence between February and May 2010, and reportedly remain embroiled in extortion activities.

Despite the stalemate over many critical matters, there has been some encouraging progress in reducing contentious issues in the new constitution. While the high-level task force that helped achieve this was dissolved in December, the 28 parties represented in the Constituent Assembly have decided to meet regularly under the leadership of the Speaker to address the remaining 83 contentious issues in the constitution-drafting process. The parties will seek to amend parliamentary regulations in order to send unresolved issues to the Constitutional Committee. Time is short for these tasks to be accomplished before the 28 May deadline for promulgation.

The political parties showed significant flexibility in the high-level task force, chaired by UCPN-M Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, in rapidly resolving several issues. Serious differences still remain, however, on the names, numbers and boundaries of federal states and on forms of governance.

Nepal's new constitution is expected to reflect the most important commitments of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, making that constitution perhaps the single most critical milestone in the country's democratic transition.

As UNMIN prepares to leave Nepal after four years, its work should be a source of pride to the United Nations. The Mission's rapid deployment came about with strong support from regional and other actors, notably the Governments of India and Norway. UNMIN was fortunate in securing deeply dedicated personnel, and was able to include among its national staff a high proportion of traditionally marginalized groups.

UNMIN brought expertise and impartiality to the support of the elections; to the monitoring of arms and armies and the convening of 134 sessions of the Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee, which has resolved many issues and prevented their politicization; to the registration and verification of Maoist personnel in cantonments; and to the negotiation of the discharge of the disqualified. UNMIN also maintained steadfast impartiality in investigating and assessing reported violations of the Arms Monitoring Agreement.

Cooperation between UNMIN and the United Nations country team has been high. By the middle of 2008, responsibility for mine action had been transferred to the country team, as had, by early 2009, leadership of the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal. Child protection issues, especially the discharge of Maoist army personnel disqualified as minors, has involved solid coordination among UNMIN, the Office of the Resident Coordinator, the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Although the process is still incomplete, the Mission has performed its mandated tasks and has, I am convinced, contributed significantly to the peace process. The Mission has faced high expectations from the public and the parties, well beyond its limited mandate, as core political disputes can be resolved only by the parties themselves.

The primary objective of the Mission's establishment was the successful election of the Constituent Assembly. Upon its completion, the monitoring task was extended repeatedly, while relations among the parties continued to erode. The Mission would have benefited from a review of the mandate after the elections. Stronger support to the peace process overall, possibly including monitoring of the peace agreements more broadly, as well as technical support, particularly to the integration and rehabilitation process, should have been considered seriously. Some parties did ask UNMIN to take on elements of these roles.

UNMIN has been an expression of the international community's support for and investment in Nepal's peace process. There has been understandable frustration with an attenuated process

far removed from the optimistic 12-month period originally mandated by the Council. Four years on, it should be recognized that Nepal has undertaken a complex long-term project of peace, democracy and State transformation.

The historic Twelve-point Understanding which the warring parties signed in 2005 committed them to establishing absolute democracy in Nepal, but completing the course and managing the process have now become acutely challenging. Deep divisions have emerged over its direction and the sequencing of steps, especially with respect to the future of Maoist army personnel and the promulgation of the new constitution.

While Nepal's dramatic political gains are not likely to be reversed, the risks have clearly grown. There have at times been fears among many Nepalis over the prospect of a "peoples' revolt", which remains an explicit Maoist threat; of the President stepping in, as recently called for by the Vice-President, should the parties fail to find a way forward; or of an army-backed coup. Any such measures would sorely threaten peace and Nepal's fragile democracy.

Adopting the new constitution should close the door firmly on any undemocratic governance alternatives, of which the United Nations has also repeatedly warned. Parties on both the left and the right will need to show patience and remain faithful to the core documents of the peace process. The traditional parties need to demonstrate that their intention was not simply to marginalize the Maoists through day-to-day politics, while the Maoists must demonstrate unambiguously that they intend to abide by democratic politics.

This peace process can be brought to a close in two ways: satisfactorily, through the negotiated resolution of outstanding issues, or abortively, with one or more parties reneging on their solemn commitments. Setbacks and challenges are inevitable, but it is in the interest of the country, the region and the international community as a whole that the peace process be maintained, respected and steered to a proper close. UNMIN has continued to encourage dignified negotiated solutions, which require a moderation of positions on all sides. The parties can build on the dialogue that has been their long-standing strength, shun the demonizing of one another, and sidestep the broad array of spoilers. At this moment, we encourage them to come to rapid agreement on the future of the monitoring of arms and armies.

It remains vital that the international community speak with one voice on the need for the peace process to continue on the basis of dialogue and compromise, for Nepal to have a new constitution by the end of May as agreed by the parties, and for a smooth election under the new constitution.

The matter of Nepal's peace process will now remain on the agenda of the Council for a further three years. Consistent with the strong and sustained support of the Secretary-General and the United Nations over the past several years for peace efforts in Nepal, principally through the United Nations Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations will remain engaged and continue to make its contribution to the success of this process.

This is my final briefing to the Council on Nepal. I would like to thank the Government of Nepal and the political parties for their engagement with UNMIN, and likewise the Nepal Army and the Maoist army for their professional and profound commitment to our cooperation, particularly in the Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee. I want to acknowledge the role played by sectors of civil society in Nepal's peace process and the knowledge and advice that they have shared with the Mission. We have worked closely with the national and international media in Nepal and beyond, and I appreciate the interest they have taken in UNMIN's role in the peace process.

UNMIN has benefited from close consultation and communication with the international diplomatic and development community in Nepal, and especially the Council members represented there. On behalf of the Secretary-General, all my dedicated colleagues in UNMIN, the United Nations family in Kathmandu, and the Department of Political Affairs, I would like to thank the Council and Member States, for the support they have given UNMIN over the last four years and will continue to give to Nepal's remarkable peace process.

Finally, I would like to express my profound personal gratitude to all my devoted colleagues, and especially to Ian Martin, Tamrat Samuel and Under-Secretary-General B. Lynn Pascoe, for our close and supportive working relationships.

The President: I thank Ms. Landgren for her briefing.

I now give the floor to the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): First of all, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming the presidency of the Council for the month of January. I would also like to acknowledge the presence of the new members of the Security Council and wish them all the best in their new responsibilities.

We have taken note of the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) contained in document S/2010/658, which highlights his assessment of the situation of Nepal's peace process over the past four months. Likewise, I wish to take note of remarks just made by Ms. Karin Landgren, Representative of the Secretary-General.

The way it has been presented, it looks as if we are moving towards a failure. I would like to state here in no uncertain terms that we are not looking at the failure of the peace process; we are working hard to ensure the successful transition towards the consolidation of peace. It is a natural shift from one stage to another. That is why there are certain complexities, which, I think, is only natural in any post-conflict situation, especially when that post-conflict situation is giving rise to an historic transformation.

The United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) was established on 23 January 2007 through resolution 1740 (2007) as a special political mission to assist Nepal in its homegrown peace process. The United Nations was invited pursuant to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed on 21 November 2006 between the Government of Nepal and the then-Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist. UNMIN's planned one-year term has seen seven extensions and now extends to 15 January 2011.

I concur with the view of the Secretary-General that UNMIN has been a positive factor in the difficult context presented by the peace process during this period. On behalf of the Government and people of Nepal, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the United Nations, and in particular to UNMIN and its dedicated staff, for their contributions in the mandated areas to consolidating peace in Nepal. They helped us move towards a post-conflict situation on solid ground.

Now, we are preparing for the takeover after a four-year contribution of UNMIN to Nepal's peace process. The Government of Nepal has made every effort to ensure a smooth handover of all the works of UNMIN to the Special Committee, which is formed under the provision of article 146 of the interim constitution of Nepal. Representation on the Special Committee is comprised of major political parties, including the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist.

Resolution 1740 (2007) mandated the UNMIN to monitor the management of arms and armed personnel on both sides, assist in the monitoring of the ceasefire arrangements, and provide technical support for the planning, preparation and conduct of the election of a Constituent Assembly in a free and fair atmosphere.

UNMIN provided considerable assistance to the national authorities in conducting the historic Constituent Assembly elections and, prior to that, assisted in monitoring the ceasefire. In the aftermath of the successful elections to the Constituent Assembly, UNMIN has monitored the arms and Maoist army combatants cantoned in the 7 main and 21 satellite camps in different geographic areas of the country, and chaired the Joint Monitoring Coordination Committee.

After the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on 21 November 2006, Nepal's peace process has achieved historic progress on several fronts. The promulgation of the interim constitution, the election to the Constituent Assembly and the declaration of a Federal Democratic Republic are crucial milestones in the contemporary history of Nepal. This has been possible with the courage, determination and understanding of the people of Nepal, led by the political parties, with the firm support of the international community.

The release of approximately 4,000 disqualified combatants in the beginning of 2010 was another significant step forward in our peace process. Among the released 4,008 disqualified ex-combatants, around 3,000 were identified as minors. I am happy to note that the Security Council team led by His Excellency Ambassador Claude Heller of Mexico visited Nepal in November for the first field visit of the Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

After the promulgation of the interim constitution of Nepal in 2007 and the Constituent Assembly election, Nepal's peace process entered into the new stage of peace consolidation. The Constituent Assembly has the primary function of writing a constitution for the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal that guarantees multi-party democracy, human rights, a federal structure and inclusive governance for the historic transformation of Nepal's political, economic and social landscapes. But at the same time, the Constituent Assembly is also working as a legislature-parliament and is therefore engaged in the parliamentary business, including the formation of a new Government.

Nepal's peace process will reach its culmination following the reintegration and rehabilitation of combatants and the promulgation of a new constitution. We are working hard on both these fronts. I would therefore like to assure the Security Council that we will be doing this with diligence and with devotion. The high-level committee comprised of top leaders from major political parties has succeeded in ironing out many of the differences — in fact, out of 180, already more than 130 have been taken care of — in the thematic reports of the Constituent Assembly. There are a number of issues that need to be settled in the months ahead by the parties at the Constituent Assembly. If it is taking more time, it is only because of the historic task of transformation that the new constitution is going to usher in the political, social and economic spheres in the days ahead.

We are fully cognizant of the fact that there are some concerns that Nepal's peace process has sometimes stalled or not moved forward as quickly as possible. But we believe that, given the necessary courage, maturity and flexibility, which the political parties have exhibited in times of need in the past, all the parties will muster a high level of maturity and understanding and move towards the logical conclusion of the peace process. This is so because the people of Nepal, more than anybody else, look forward to the full transition to a normal situation at the earliest possible time. That would effectively stimulate rapid and inclusive economic development and accelerate the building of necessary infrastructure within a consolidated atmosphere of peace and security. It would also contribute to strengthening stability and prosperity on a sustainable basis in the economically vibrant neighbourhood of Nepal. We are aware that this is what the international community is looking forward to in Nepal as well.

The Government has already made the necessary preparations with a view to making the constitutionally formed Special Committee a body capable of taking over all the works of UNMIN in a seamless manner after the Mission's withdrawal. The Special Committee will supervise arms and Maoist army combatants as per the guidelines laid out in the directives for supervision, control, direction and code of conduct for the Maoist Army combatants, which were adopted unanimously on 17 September 2010. I repeat that these directives have already been approved unanimously by the Committee.

The Special Committee will itself be a place to settle disputes and any other issues that may come up in the course of the peace process onwards. The Government of Nepal has already sent a letter to UNMIN and, through it, to the United Nations on issues related to the monitoring of Maoist army combatants and arms, on the Nepal Army and arms, on the Agreement on the Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies, on the dispute resolution mechanism, and on the request for the transfer of the updated records of Maoist arms and army combatants and all the materials, equipment and logistics used by UNMIN for monitoring tasks.

The Government and people of Nepal remain grateful to the United Nations, particularly the Security Council, for providing continued support for our peace process from the beginning. I wish to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Council as a whole and to each and every member of the Council for extending excellent cooperation in Nepal's peace process.

I would like to express my Government's gratitude and sincere thanks to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his personal interest in the success of Nepal's peace process. He visited Nepal during UNMIN's mandate in October 2008, and expressed his firm commitment to its success. My sincere appreciation and thanks also go to Under-Secretary-General Lynn Pascoe for his consistent involvement and several important visits that contributed to consolidating Nepal's peace process. I would also like to thank Ms. Karin Landgren for leading her able team and for their dedicated service in Nepal.

I also take this opportunity to thank her predecessor, Mr. Ian Martin, for his contribution in Nepal, first as the head of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Nepal, and later as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and head of UNMIN during the crucial phases of our peace process. My thanks also go to Mr. Tamrat Samuel for his contributions in his capacity as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Director of the Asia and Pacific Division of the Department of Political Affairs. UNMIN and its leaders will be remembered for their contributions to Nepal's peace process and contemporary developments.

Finally, we are confident that we will continue to enjoy international support and goodwill to consolidate peace, stability and economic development in Nepal. It is incumbent upon me, on behalf of my Government and people, to assure the Security Council that Nepal is committed to the path of peace, stability and development and will remain fully engaged with the international community in the days ahead. Peace, development and human rights are indivisible, and they need to be supported coherently to ensure the sustainable progress of all countries around the world. This is even more true for countries emerging from conflict. We look forward to working together in the days ahead to ensure a better and prosperous future for all the Nepali people within a more peaceful and secure world.

The President: On behalf of the Council, I would like to express our gratitude to Ms. Karin Landgren, who is today making her last briefing to the Council in her capacity as Representative of the Secretary-General in Nepal. We have appreciated her leadership of the United Nations Mission in Nepal, and we wish her every success in her future endeavours.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.